

BALTIMORE SUN

SOVIET UNION PROPAGANDA 'EFFECT' CITED

General Bradley Refers To NATO In Noting Iceland Action

By PHILIP POTTER

(Washington Bureau of The Sun)

Washington, April 16—Gen. Omar N. Bradley said today the Icelandic Parliament's demand for withdrawal of United States forces was proof that Russian propaganda was "beginning to have an effect on the integrity of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."

He told a special Senate Armed Services subcommittee that it was a matter of "very much concern," since it not only affected the "effectiveness" of NATO but would "knock out one of our strategic bases for retaliatory attack" and reduce our capacity to "intercept" Soviet bombers.

Senator Welker (R., Idaho) suggested that Russia had "blackmailed" Iceland into taking this action by raising the possibility that it had a ballistic missile with a 1,500-mile range.

Stresses Retaliatory Power

Bradley, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who is now chairman of the board of Bulova Research Corporation, said he did not have information on the subject, but it must be recognized that such threats may be made to any of our Allies within range of Russia.

It was a possibility, he said, under questioning by Senator Symington (D., Mo.), subcommittee chairman, that Russia was trying to achieve military supremacy so it could achieve her aims by "blackmail" without going to war.

Asked by Welker whether the Iceland incident meant the United States should enhance its efforts to improve the range of its planes and missiles, Bradley did not answer directly, but said it was our known retaliatory power that thus far had held NATO together.

Lead-Off Witnesses

Bradley and Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, former Under Secretary of State and now vice chairman of the board of the American Machine Foundry Company, were lead-off witnesses in an investigation to determine whether the United States is losing ground to Russia in air power.

Symington, who has charged in frequent speeches that the Republican Administration has endangered national security by budget-balancing cuts in defense outlays, said as the inquiry opened that it would focus on one fundamental question: "Are the present and planned strengths of the United States Air Force adequate to preserve the peace through the deterrence of aggression?"

Both Bradley and Smith testified that postwar developments in nuclear weapons, guided missiles and jet planes meant we would no longer have time to prepare after war began and declared our defense now rested on "forces in being."

But both men, under repeated questioning by Democratic committee members, said in effect that they were not adequately informed on the present situation to pass judgment as to the adequacy of various armed forces.

Bradley said he had not received an intelligence briefing for 2½ years.

Smith said the United States, consistent with maintaining a sound economy, must do what it can to keep abreast of potential aggressors in "vital areas" but added "I wouldn't want to say what those areas are. Our forces must be kept adequate," he said, but he could not say "what the components should be," and he would not want to give priority to one element over others without "great study."

Much of the testimony centered on Russia's progress in industrial and technical fields since the end of the war.

Situation "Change" Cited

Smith testified that the Soviet Union was "closing the gap" which existed when the war ended. He said that he and others had "underestimated" that country's ability to "overcome handicaps," including the severe destruction sustained during the war.

The former Ambassador to Russia said it had been his belief that Russia had only a "thin crust" of top-level scientists and a "very great shortage" of technicians which would make it difficult to catch up with the United States.

But, he said, the situation had now changed "very greatly," with Russia producing many "quite competent engineers" and her output of technicians now exceeding that in the United States.

He said a dictatorial regime had been able not only to deny the people consumer goods but had compelled youth of talent to enter designated fields.

Jackson Asks Question

Russia now has the power to match American progress in field where its leaders wish to concentrate, he said, and its technical achievements cannot be "taken lightly."

Asked by Senator Jackson (D., Wash.) what would be the result if we lost the race for air supremacy, both quantitatively and qualitatively, Smith said it would be "disastrous."

He added, however, that capacity to deter Russia from all-out attack did not depend on air power alone, but on the overall military and economic strength of the United States and its Allies.

He said under further questioning that he thought it would have a "very grave psychological effect" on our Allies if Russia were first in achieving a 1,500-mile medium-range ballistic missile.

Problem Called "Serious"

Senator Duff (R., Pa.) noted the committee had received information that Russian schools are turning out 2½ times as many engineers and double the number of scientists trained in our own institutions. He said unless there were a "stepup" in our own educational processes, we could "well wind up on the short end."

Smith agreed, noting that his own company within the last month had lost three key technical men to firms offering more pay, he said the problem was "very serious."

General Bradley, in a prepared statement, said air power had become "predominant" as both a "deterrent" to war and as a means of devastating the enemy's country in event of war.

He said it must be borne in mind that "all other nations are also rapidly improving the radius and the impact of their striking force" in long-range rockets, long-range planes and submarines.

Emphasizes Defense

He said it was his "firm belief" that a third world war would bring an immediate attack on the United States, which would call for powerful and decisive retaliation, if we were to survive.

But offensive air power, he said, must be supplemented by defensive forces to protect both our own country and strategic bases abroad.

Bradley said the constant improvement of our planes and other weapons was only part of the problem faced in keeping our defenses alert, and must be coupled with "action" to secure and train good personnel.

"In my opinion, the problem of providing proper incentive to insure adequate career personnel competes in importance with the development and production of better planes and weapons," he said.

"While we are primarily discussing air power and its application, we cannot do so without considering also the maintenance of sufficient ground strength to protect our bases and sources of supply, as well as the naval strength necessary to maintain our lines of communications to such sources."

Warning Issued

In emphasizing the necessity for strong forces in being, Bradley warned that "we are getting more vulnerable to attack all the time."

He said the United States need not match Russia division for division, plane for plane, or ship for ship, but should strive for superiority "over the vulnerable point . . . wherever we are going to meet." He said he did not believe we ought to imitate Russia and devote our entire industry to production of war material.